

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-10

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FM AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 932

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PINT, PGOV, PP

SUBJ: BOUGAINVILLE SECESSIONIST MOVEMENT

REF: STATE 230973

1. LOCAL PRESS REPORTED SEPTEMBER 24 NAMING OF NEW DISTRICT COMMISSIONER FOR BOUGAINVILLE BENSON GEGEYO, CHARACTERIZED AS TOUGH NO NONSENSE ADMINISTRATOR FROM NORTHERN DISTRICT (PAPUA) WHO REPLACES BOUGAINVILLIAN DR. ALEXIS SAREI WHO HAS RESIGNED FROM PUBLIC SERVICE.

2. ON THE 25TH THE PRESS CARRIED STATEMENT BY LEO HANNETT, BPG SPOKESMAN STATING PLANS WELL IN HAND FOR SECESSIONISTS TO TAKE OVER SEVERAL PATROL POSTS IN BOUGAINVILLE INCLUDING BOKA WHICH WAS TO BE TEST CASE. HANNETT'S REMARKS COINCIDED WITH ARRIVAL NEW DISTRICT COMMISSIONER WHOSE APPOINTMENT HANNETT CRITICIZED REMARKING THAT "GEGEYO COULD EXPECT NO COOPERATION FROM THE BOUGAINVILLE PEOPLE".

3. BOUGAINVILLE POLICE WERE ALERTED AND RIOT SQUAD FLOWN IN FROM RABAU. PRESENCE POLICE AT BOKA THWARTED TAKEOVER PLAN, ALTHOUGH MODERATING VOICE OF PRES BUIN
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LOCAL GOVT COUNCIL AND CHAIRMAN BPG ASSEMBLY ALOYSIUS

NOGA EVIDENTLY PREVAILED OVER SECESSIONISTS NOT TO TAKE LAW INTO OWN HANDS. NOGA STATED DOOR WAS STILL OPEN FOR NEGOTIATIONS WITH NATIONAL GOVERNMENT. JUSTICE MINISTER OLEWALE QUICKLY RESPONDED THAT NATIONAL GOVT WAS WAITING FOR BPG TO ACCEPT INVITATION FOR FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS.

4. IT SHOULD BE NOTED PRESS REPORTS THAT AT SAME TIME GPNG IS SERVING SUMMONS ON MIDDLE LEVEL SECESSIONIST LEADERS FOR ALLEGED OFFENCES DURING THE PAST FEW WEEKS. PRO SECESSIONISTS MEMBERS ARE CURRENTLY IN CLOSED CONFERENCE AT ARAWA.

5. COMMENT: DEVELOPMENTS APPEAR TO BE ILL ADVISED BPG RESPONSE TO GOVT DECISION TO ASSIGN ALLEGEDLY TOUGH NON-BOUGAINVILLIAN AS NEW DISTRICT COMMISSIONER. WHILE KEEPING DOOR OPEN WE MAY BE SEEING BEGINNING OF EROSION OF GPNG'S REMARKABLE RESTRAINING RE BOUGAINVILLE. FOREIGN DIGNITARIES HAVE GONE HOME NOW, AND GPNG LEADERS MAY WONDER HOW LONG THEY HAVE TO PUT UP WITH HANNETT'S NONSENSE.
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